



Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority

TDA Board

Dawn Hemmelgarn

Chair - TDA Board Chair
Executive Committee

Dan Hegeman

1st Vice Chair
Executive Committee
Chair - VIN Wayfinding
Committee

Lisa Sullivan

2nd Vice Chair
Executive Committee
Chair - VIN Info Committee

Jeff Bradley

VIN Information Committee

Tim Ferris

VIN Wayfinding Committee

Dwayne Harris

VIN Information Committee

Denise Holland

VIN Information Committee

Ann Washburn Hutchins

VIN Wayfinding Committee

James Ledgerwood

Tourism Asset Foundation
(TAF)

Ruffin Tanner

Tourism Asset Foundation
(TAF)

Ex-Officio

Eddie Holland

County Commissioner

Paula Roach

Finance Director

Wayfinding Presentation And TDA Board Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 12:30 p.m.
The Bechtler House, Rutherfordton, NC

Wayfinding Presentation	<i>Michelle Whitaker</i>
Welcome	<i>Dawn Hemmelgarn</i>
Additions/Deletions to the Agenda	<i>Dawn Hemmelgarn</i>
Review Past Minutes – April 10th, 2014	<i>Dawn Hemmelgarn</i>
Finance Report	<i>Michelle Whitaker</i>
TDA Activity Reports/Updates	<i>Michelle Whitaker</i>
Discuss upcoming board meeting dates	<i>Dan Hegeman</i>
Adjourn	

*Next TDA Board Meeting: June 19 (suggested date), 2014:
Date/Location TBA*



Rutherford County TDA

Meeting Minutes – 4/10/14 (To Be Approved)

Rumbling Bald Resort, Lake Lure, NC

Members Present: Dawn Hemmelgarn, Dan Hegeman, Lisa Sullivan, Denise Holland, Jeff Bradley, Ann Washburn Hutchins, Dwayne Harris, Paula Roach (Ex-Officio),

Members Absent: Ruffin Tanner, Tim Ferris, James Ledgerwood

Call to Order

Dawn Hemmelgarn called the meeting called to order 12:29 p.m.

Agenda

After a review, Dan Hegeman moved to amend the agenda to present the financial report separately from the activity report. Lisa Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

12/19/13 Minutes

After a review, Lisa Sullivan made a motion to approve minutes as written. Denise Holland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Paula Roach discussed a School of Government webinar regarding occupancy tax collection procedures, the new tax collection software starting in July, and how, also in July, the occupancy tax remittance address will change.

Michelle Whitaker reported collections were down 2.06% from the same time last year; however original projections were that we would be down over 4%.

Motion to approve the follow line item transfers by Lisa Sullivan, seconded by Denise Holland. Motion approved.

Transfer to 70-6520-341-00-000: \$4000 from 70-6520-311-00-000, \$3000 from 70-6520-185-00-000, \$1500 from 70-6520-190-07-000 and \$500 from 70-6520-190-12-000. Transfer to 70-6520-126-00-000: \$13,500 from 70-6520-185-00-000

Activity Report

Public Relations/Marketing

The McConnell Group reported on all PR efforts and on recent and upcoming PR tours, including one in conjunction with the U.S. Open. A familiarization tour is scheduled for April 1st, 2014.

VIN/Wayfinding Committee Report

Dan Hegeman reported on several meetings since January 8th with Teague and Associates working on county signage. There will be future meetings to coordinate with all areas involved.

Asset Development

Michelle Whitaker reported that TDA, EDC and chamber representatives met with the county manager in regards to tourism as economic development.



Meeting Minutes - 4/10/14 (To Be Approved); Continued

Asset Development

There was a T.A.F. presentation at the Governor's conference on the NC Gold Trail. The first Gold Trail meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 4/29/14 at 11:00 a.m. at the Bechtler House.

Other

Executive Director is visiting various community groups. The Welcome Center is providing feedback for us on several fronts. The Executive Director attended the Governor's Conference on travel and tourism and presented on the economic impact of film on NC tourism.

NC Film Resolution

The board reviewed and discussed a resolution in support of the NC Film Incentive.

Board Members Internet Survey

Dawn Hemmelgarn expressed appreciation for everyone's service to the board and discussed growing individual member efforts.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The TDA's next meeting is slated for 5/22/14 at 12:00 noon. Ann Hutchins is to find the location.

Motion to adjourn by Lisa Sullivan. Seconded Jeff Bradley. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.



Financial Reports

Month Collected	For Month Of	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14 Current	13-14 Projected	% Growth
JULY	JUNE	33,605	70,098	75,455	71,407	58,682	62,021	72,516	77,798	67,883	67,883	-12.74%
AUG	JULY	49,028	99,586	101,420	96,055	88,743	99,712	115,068	105,814	97,492	97,492	-7.86%
SEPT	AUG	35,406	69,790	86,186	85,967	66,194	74,964	79,463	84,295	84,414	84,414	0.14%
OCT	SEPT	25,638	46,361	52,675	40,435	44,737	50,817	54,132	50,874	50,698	50,698	-0.35%
NOV	OCT	51,901	54,620	58,982	55,593	55,065	57,927	57,994	60,680	61,961	61,961	2.11%
DEC	NOV	31,078	37,091	35,914	30,330	28,571	33,724	35,610	33,854	34,703	34,703	2.51%
JAN	DEC	24,590	25,203	25,830	19,389	20,358	22,369	25,218	24,264	25,712	25,712	5.97%
FEB	JAN	15,437	18,058	16,414	15,467	15,266	16,422	14,874	15,284	18,361	18,361	20.13%
MARCH	FEB	18,411	19,253	18,324	15,957	17,589	19,141	20,575	17,193	19,331	19,331	12.44%
APRIL	MARCH	2,762	28,762	26,357	21,953	22,681	25,130	30,169	26,739	30,922	30,922	15.65%
MAY	APRIL	36,583	40,309	32,826	27,998	33,447	39,684	36,830	32,709		32,709	0.00%
JUNE	MAY	40,183	48,875	47,522	39,242	39,641	47,035	45,447	44,733		44,733	0.00%
		364,622	558,006	577,905	519,793	490,974	548,946	587,896	574,237	491,477	568,919	

Line Item Transfers

Transfer: \$317 to 70-6520-186-000 (worker's comp) From: 70-6520-299-10-000 (TDA promo/merch)

Transfer: \$80 to 70-6520-189-01-000 (Cafe Admin) From: 70-6520-192-00-000 (prof.serv.-audit)

Transfer: \$1000 to 70-6520-190-04-000 (prof. svc/pr stakeholder) From: 70-6520-370-00-000 (advertising)

Transfer: \$30 to 70-6520-192-03-000 (fees) From: 70-6520-260-00-000 (office supplies)

Transfer: \$5000 to 70-6520-190-02-000 (mkt/internet) From 70-6520-370-00-000 (advertising)

Transfer: \$600 to 70-6520-491-00-000 (dues/subs) From: 70-6520-260-00-000 (office supplies)

Transfer: \$4200 to 70-6520-510-01-000 (vin sites and llwc) From: 70-6520-370-00-000 (unemployment)

Transfer: \$4500 to 70-6520-394-00-000 (janitorial) From: 70-6520-185-00-000 (unemployment)

Transfer: \$8000 to 70-6520-341-00-000 (printing) From: 70-6520-185-00-000 (unemployment)



Financial Reports

TDA Occupancy Tax Report
Category Comparison

MONTH	FOR	% change from prior year same period			
COLL	MONTH				
	OF				
		Bed & Breakfast	Cabins & Campgrounds	Hotel/Motel	Resorts
FY 12-13 and FY 13-14					
JULY	JUNE	-67.81%	6.25%	-23.52%	-1.62%
AUG	JULY	-56.91%	1.20%	-20.54%	8.27%
SEPT	AUG	-3.13%	0.56%	-13.25%	2.74%
OCT	SEPT	7.29%	-2.47%	1.80%	-4.38%
NOV	OCT	-0.99%	10.16%	-6.28%	15.06%
DEC	NOV	11.03%	10.13%	4.23%	-25.35%
JAN	DEC	-17.43%	12.94%	-2.58%	-6.89%
FEB	JAN	-28.92%	30.17%	-4.70%	30.66%
MAR	FEB	-8.58%	25.61%	-3.15%	-55.29%
APR	MAR	-27.89%	11.13%	0.79%	10.77%
MAY	APR				
JUNE	MAY				
FY 11-12 and FY 12-13					
JULY	JUNE	24.55%	5.25%	11.08%	-2.22%
AUG	JULY	8.49%	-15.32%	-1.61%	-5.77%
SEPT	AUG	-51.57%	13.46%	6.55%	13.24%
OCT	SEPT	-58.00%	1.53%	-1.27%	-2.07%
NOV	OCT	-48.38%	8.07%	13.47%	12.41%
DEC	NOV	-48.76%	0.33%	-8.04%	41.21%
JAN	DEC	-6.61%	11.54%	-7.76%	11.91%
FEB	JAN	-11.49%	37.25%	15.47%	104.20%
MAR	FEB	-58.93%	16.11%	-1.27%	23.93%
APR	MAR	-48.37%	35.26%	-2.17%	-4.82%
MAY	APR	-52.38%	-20.27%	6.79%	26.35%
JUNE	MAY	-56.53%	14.69%	12.22%	11.42%
	% Reporting	78.46%			



Financial Reports

2014-2015 Recommended Fiscal Year Budget

2014-2015 Budget Message

After a mid-year 2013-14 realignment of budget and staff due to lower-than-expected occupancy tax collections, the second half of the 2013-14 saw a cautious but steady growth pattern.

With potential stabilization in the NC Tourism Division, a continued, level economy, good weather, a renewed and invigorated marketing team and plan, and re-opening and newly opened local attractions, we believe the current growth pattern will continue.

However, the 2014-15 recommended budget remains more conservative than the current trend would seem to indicate. Despite the upward momentum, the projected occupancy tax revenues for this budget are slightly below what we should receive in 2013-14. This is paired with a salary structure more nimble should another downturn occur. Additionally, salaries total more than \$45,000 less than in 2013-14. All of these are intended as protections against future fluctuations in revenue.

In revenues, you will find a rollover/carryforward from the 2013-14 budget for two line items – this as has been the TDA custom.

For practicality and ease of recordkeeping, the budget moved away from the practice of breaking out line items for related expenses, and instead, combined line items where it makes functional sense. Therefore, many line items which had dollars allocated for 2013-14 will not be used and do not have dollars allocated to them for 2014-15.

Nowhere is this more evident than with the marketing and public relations line items, most of which have been combined into a single “Advertising” line item. Not only does the combining of marketing and public relations items make functional sense, it also reflects the changes in these industries which have evolved greatly, blending what was once two very separate areas of work. It is important to note, however, that the total of all these line items now in the Advertising line item is almost \$30,000 less than when taken separately in 2013-14.

We look forward to a 2013-14 full of new and completed projects, ones that seek to grow the vital tourism economy of Rutherford County, NC.



Financial Reports

2014-2015 Recommended Fiscal Year Budget

Please see separate budget pdf. This pdf will be incorporated with the previous page's budget message the upcoming public review period.



Activity Reports

Marketing/PR

Collateral Materials

New area maps and a trail map are in production and due out in June.

Following this, the TDA's most comprehensive visitor's guide will be released – numerous planning sessions and revisions have already been completed.

Web and App

Continued corrections and additions have been made to both. Potential enhancements are being investigated.

County Assets Promoted

Apple Valley Golf Course, Bald Mountain Golf Course, Bennett Classics Auto Museum, Blue Ridge Distilling Company, Bostic Lincoln Festival, Bostic Lincoln Center, Chamber of Hickory Nut Gorge, Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park, Chimney Rock State Park, Chimney Rock Village, Cleghorn Plantation Golf & Country Club, Defiant Whisky, Dirty Dancing, Easter Sunrise Service, Forest City Owls, Foundation Performing Arts Center, Fox Mountain Guides, Hickory Nut Falls Trail, KidSenses, Lake Lure, Lake Lure Golf Club, Lake Lure Welcome Center, Larkin's on the Lake, Last of the Mohicans, Main Street Rutherfordton, Music at the Mills Bluegrass & Arts Festival, Party Rock, Raptors 5K Toga Run, Rockin' Naturalist Guided Hikes, Rumbling Bald Resort on Lake Lure, Sale on the Trail, Season Kickoff Beach Party, Spring GO! Festival, The Bechtler House, The Chamber of Hickory Nut Gorge, Union Mills Learning Center, Vandeale Farms on Cedar Creek

Press Releases/Media Alerts

- "Hickory Nut Falls Trail Now Open at Chimney Rock State Park"
- "The Lake Lure Legend" (regarding legendary car from bottom of Lake Lure now at Bennett Classics)
- "Rutherford County Golf"

Featured Press:

- *Hendersonville Times-News* – "History enthusiasts back creation of Gold Trail"

Statistics/Data

- Total Press Impressions July 2013 – April 30, 2014: **287,216,744 (up 61 million since February 28, 2014)**
- Total Facebook "Likes" as of 4/30/14: **5,140 (up 173 since February 28, 2014)**



Activity Reports

VIN—Information

The TDA has been implementing its new staff/volunteer scheduling program. For a nominal fee, this online program will assist greatly in setting and communicating schedules. Even more importantly, it will track staff hours used for individual as well as all staff – this will assist us as we make sure to keep staffing hours and budget in the acceptable ranges.

The online customer service program is coming online and will be available at no charge to all stakeholders interested in using its videos and quizzes.

The TDA had its first staff meeting with current staff members – the workload at the Welcome Center and Bechtler House Office is being divided up appropriately among the staff and more efforts will be covered. All are enthusiastic about the coming summer.

The new Welcome Center front desk manual is complete and ready for use. Several of the FAQ sheets in the manual will be reproduced for visitors to pick up.

The mobile unit is seeing increased use, having been involved with several recent festivals including one at the Bostic Lincoln Festival and another at the Music at the Mills Bluegrass & Arts Festival. Volunteer “towers” are being sought to further increase its use and reach.

VIN—Wayfinding

Any follow up to the Wayfinding presentation at the meeting’s start will come here.

Asset Development TAF: Gold Trail Update:

TAF held the inaugural NC Gold Trail meeting with attendees from across the state including a rep from the NC Division of Tourism. Members made plans for next steps in the trail development, and TAF is seeking applicants for a part-time position to manage and fundraise for both the Bechtler Campaign and NC Gold Trail. TAF is also working with a grant writer to pursue large, capital grants and designed a postcard for a local campaign, “The Buck Started Here.” The goal is to educate both merchants and visitors about the Bechtler story and generate more traffic at the house.

Other

The Director traveled to Raleigh for the quarterly NC Travel and Tourism Coalition board meeting. Several key topics have come to the fore including the future of the NC Division of Travel and Tourism as well as the NC Film Incentive program.



Staff Contact List May 2014

NAME	WORK PHONE	MOBILE PHONE	HOME PHONE	BIRTHDAY
Bearden, Mary	828-287-6113	828-551-0773	828-286-4232	Dec. 26 th
Dalziel, Connie	828-287-6113	563-320-1557		Dec. 24 th
Gillespie, Jackie	828-287-6113	828-421-3303		May 27 th
Hartzog, Julie	828-287-6113	828-429-9374	828-625-0391	Nov. 22 nd
Robinson, Karen	828-287-6013	828-447-0228	828-657-4565	Oct. 22 nd
Whitaker, Michelle	828-287-6121	828-748-0386	828-248-1639*	Jun. 4 th

*Emergency use only. Never leave a message, it won't be received.

Michelle Yelton: The McConnell Group, 828-980-2883



Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority

And a (nice) final note...

Dear Connie, Linda,
and Yvonne,

We were so delighted to meet all of you last week at the Visitor Center! How lucky we were to walk in when you were gathered there by chance! Thank you all for such wonderful information and sharing your insights. We absolutely can't wait to return. Hopefully

Wishing you
a wonderful Easter
and a year filled
with happiness.

April 2014

that will be soon!

Connie, your cookies were fabulous! I love the recipe! Linda, we looked online at the lodge (and saw it on our journey) and will make reservations ^{next week} for our 25th anniversary in October.

Yvonne, we love the property you mentioned and your beautiful house. Maybe we will be your neighbor one day!

Connections

from 

Thank you again for your sweet hospitality, and we look forward to the next time our paths connect!

Blessings to you,

Aaron + Michael Nghus
smnghus@att.net

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WEC 146 F

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